

The House Republicans stop many of those very important investments—including in Illinois, investments where we won in a national competition to modernize our rail system around Chicago, to make certain we have railroad service in parts of our State that currently don't, and to modernize and make safer the airports, highways, and that which is critically essential to our future.

I say to the Republican side, yes, the deficit is an issue. But first, understand we will never balance the budget with 15 million Americans out of work. We need to move this economy forward and tackle this budget in a responsible way, not just to cut one small part of it unmercifully but to put the entire budget on the table. That is what the deficit commission on which I served did. We need to do that in our Nation in a bipartisan fashion.

I am happy to continue to join my colleagues who will sit down and discuss this, including the Presiding Officer, Senator WARNER of Virginia. There are six of us—three Republicans and three Democrats. It is the most unlikely gathering of politicians that you can imagine in one room to try to come up with a solution. We are people of good will, and we know our historic responsibility. We are working through some of the hardest issues and questions any Member of Congress can face when it comes to this issue.

If we are successful—and I underline “if”—I hope we can move this country forward in a responsible way, putting the recession behind us and starting to get our house in order. We can no longer sustain a budget where we owe 40 cents for every dollar we spend. Whether you are on the left side of the spectrum, where I live politically, and value such things as help for education, help for the most vulnerable in America, or whether you are on the other side of the spectrum, which probably values national security issues and more investment in the military, both of us are in this together. We have to both understand there will not be enough money left for anything if we don't focus on doing this dramatic, historic job of coming up with a way to reduce our debt and our deficit.

Mr. President, I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BLUMENTHAL). Without objection, it is so ordered.

SPENDING CUTS

Mr. REID. Mr. President, thank you. I have a longer statement that I will give after we finish this colloquy.

At 4 o'clock yesterday afternoon, we met in the Vice President's office. It

was a very fine meeting. Vice President BIDEN was there. My friend, the Republican leader, me, the Speaker, and the minority leader of the House were there—McCONNELL, REID, BOEHNER, and PELOSI. We spent about an hour there.

The arrangement was that we would have a vote on H.R. 1 sometime next week and also a vote on the bill that we have just laid down, which is our alternative as to what we think should be done with the economy. I know our bill—because it is the way we have to do things here—is a long bill, and I am sure the minority wants to spend some time looking at that. But one way or the other we will either do it with an agreement or through my filing different procedural motions. We will get to a point next week where we will vote on H.R. 1, which we Democrats want to do. We will vote on the bill. Anyway, it has been here for a while. Whatever the number it is, it is a Democratic alternative, which Senator INOUE laid down.

We believe, and I am confident that the Speaker feels the same way, that we should vote on H.R. 1, which we have had calls for voting on for more than a week now. I have had statements from the press: Why doesn't REID set up a vote on H.R. 1? We will either do that with a unanimous consent agreement with my friend, the Republican leader, or we will do it through a procedural motion that I will file later today.

The amendment to that bill is No. 149, and that is Senator INOUE's. It cuts some \$51 billion from what the President's budget was.

To move the process forward, I think this is a place to start. We have some confidence that we will get votes on our bill, and we will move this matter forward. Regardless, if H.R. 1 does not pass—and it will not pass—and if ours does not pass, we at least know where we stand to move this ball down the road a little further.

The Speaker said that would allow the negotiations to start. I am paraphrasing, but that is about what he said. That is what all of us in the room decided to do yesterday.

Today I seek to set those two votes for Tuesday afternoon: one vote on passing H.R. 1, as it came over from the House, and after that we would have a vote on passing the alternative, which Chairman INOUE has drafted and is amendment No. 149. Once we get that, it would seem a fair proposition to move forward.

As I said, I know my friend, the Republican leader, has a scheduling problem. I understand that. I would have liked to have come in earlier today, and so would he, but we were not able to do that. I will give a more full explanatory statement in a few minutes.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUESTS—H.R. 1

But right now, I ask unanimous consent that upon disposition of S. 23, which is the patent bill, the Senate proceed to the consideration of Calendar No. 14, H.R. 1, the Defense appro-

priations long-term continuing resolution for fiscal year 2011; that Senator REID be recognized to offer a substitute amendment, the text of which is at the desk; that there be 4 hours of debate equally divided between the two leaders or their designees prior to a vote in relation to the substitute amendment; that upon disposition of the substitute amendment, the Senate proceed to vote on H.R. 1, as amended, if amended, with no intervening action or debate; that no motions or amendments be in order to the substitute amendment or to the bill prior to the votes; that the substitute amendment and the bill be subject to a 60-vote threshold; and that if H.R. 1, as amended, if amended, does not achieve 60 affirmative votes, it be returned to the calendar.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. McCONNELL. Reserving the right to object, and for the short term I am going to object today, we received this 350-page amendment at 11:45. We need a chance over the weekend to take a look at what our friends have offered. It could well be by Monday we will conclude this proposal the majority leader has laid out as the best way to go forward. We will continue to talk about that over the weekend. But for today I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that upon disposition of S. 23, the patent bill, the Senate proceed to H.R. 1, the Defense appropriations long-term continuing resolution for fiscal year 2011.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. McCONNELL. For the same reason, I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

FULL-YEAR CONTINUING APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2011—MOTION TO PROCEED

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I move to proceed to Calendar No. 14, H.R. 1.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the motion.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

Motion to proceed to H.R. 1, an act making appropriations for the Department of Defense and the other departments and agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2011, and for other purposes.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. REID. I have a cloture motion that is at the desk. I ask the clerk report the motion.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, hereby move to bring to a close debate on the motion to proceed to Calendar No. 14, H.R. 1, an act